

## A NEW HOUSE-INVADING ANT FROM MASSACHUSETTS

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### INTRODUCTION

There are but a few species of ants which in our northern climate invade houses and make them their temporary or permanent abodes. The most common of these are the black carpenter ant (*Camponotus herculeanus pennsylvanicus*), *Solenopsis molesta*, *Tetramorium caespitum* and a few other species which were introduced into this country through commerce, and flourish in greenhouses. Wheeler, *Ants*, 1910, cited *Camponotus herculeanus ferrugineus* and *novoboracensis* as house pests, but these forms seem to invade human dwellings rarely and prefer the outdoor life. I have observed *Crematogaster lineolata* nesting beneath the porch of our house for several years, but this ant does not actually invade the house and steal provisions as *Solenopsis* does, or, like *Camponotus*, cause damage to the timbers.

Some time ago a new ant invaded our kitchen, nesting in an inaccessible spot underneath the sink. Closer examination showed that this ant was an unrecorded form of *Myrmica*, a genus which has not been previously observed to invade houses. No measures were taken to exterminate the ants while they were under observation; after several weeks they disappeared without trace, which seems to indicate that the kitchen had been a temporary abode.

***Myrmica (Myrmica) brevinodis* var *transversinodis*, var nov.**

(Figs. 1, 2)

WORKER.—Length 3.5 mm. Color dark brown, almost black; thorax barely lighter than the rest of the body; antennæ and legs light brown; mandibles reddish yellow.

Head rectangular; excluding the mandibles barely longer than broad, its sides nearly straight, its posterior border feebly concave. Mandibles strongly longitudinally striated, the cutting edge with two blunt apical teeth and several blunt denticles; the denticles are markedly smaller and there is no gradual decrease in size of the teeth as in most related forms. Clypeus, longitudinally striated, with about 14 striæ. Antennal fossæ finely

punctate, not circularly striated. The antennal scapes fail to reach the occipital corners by their thickness at the apex. Antennæ 12-jointed, with

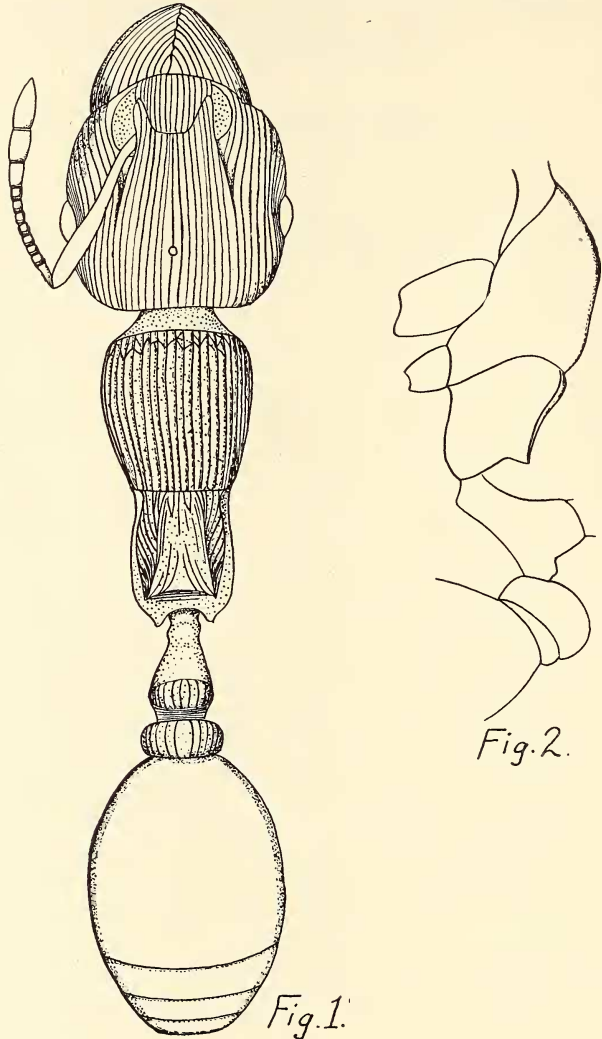


FIG. 1. Dorsal view of *Myrmica* (*Myrmica*) *brevinodis* var. *transversinodis*.

FIG. 2. Thorax and petiole in profile of the same.

a distinctly 3-jointed club. Head regularly and rather finely longitudinally striated. Median ocellus present in some workers.

Thorax without promesonotal suture (present in the var. *alaskensis*). Mesepinotal impression very narrow and deep. Epinotal base long, as long as  $\frac{2}{3}$  the length of the promesonotum. Epinotal spines shorter than in any of the described forms of *brevinodis*; much shorter than their distance apart at the base, sharp, triangular, laterally compressed and a little erect. Sculpture of thorax coarsely and irregularly longitudinally rugose, reticulate just behind the neck. The neck is densely punctate. Epinotal declivity transversely striated above and densely punctate.

Petiole with a short peduncle armed below with an anteroventral cone; its sides and the peduncle above densely punctate. Node almost as high as the petiole is long, with weakly convex anterior and posterior slopes and flat summit. Postpetiole globular in profile, its sides densely punctate. Both nodes from above transversely oval, the second node more than the first. Sculpture of the nodes above weakly circularly rugose and densely punctate.

Gaster elliptical, not truncated in front; very finely punctate and very shiny.

Pilosity sparse; a few long white hairs are present on the upper surfaces of the body, more abundant on the gaster. Legs with shorter and adpressed hairs.

Holotype, worker, No. 2, in my private collection. A great many workers were taken from files moving under the kitchen sink near the drain pipe.

Type Locality.—Dedham, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

The new ant is different from all previously recorded forms of *M. brevinodis*. It differs from *alaskensis* by the absence of a promesonotal suture; from *bruesi* by having the prothorax longitudinally sculptured (transversely in *bruesi*); from *sulcinodoides*, *subalpina kuschei*, *canadensis* by its very short epinotal spines; its nearest relatives are *brevispinosa*, *frigida* and *descendens*; it differs from all three by its darker color, very short epinotal spines, presence of a median ocellus at least in some workers, and other characters.